United Nations S/2016/368

Security Council

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Letter dated 21 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 21 April 2016 from the Special Representative of the Syrian National Coalition to the United Nations, Najib Ghadbian (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the attached letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdallah Y. **Al-Mouallimi**
Permanent Representative

16-06690 (E) 270416

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Annex to the letter dated 21 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the High Negotiations Committee of the Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, and as requested by the Chief Coordinator of the Committee, Riad Hijab, it is my honour to transmit to you a letter from Riad Hijab dated 21 April 2016 (see enclosure), in which he discusses the violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement in Syria, with particular emphasis on the massacres of 19 April 2016.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative of the Syrian National Coalition
to the United Nations

Enclosure

On behalf of the High Negotiations Committee of the Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, it is with great urgency that I draw your attention to the massacres in the Syrian towns of Kafr Nabl and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, Idlib governorate, and the air strikes in Aleppo and Rif Dimashq committed by the Assad regime and its supporters on 19 April 2016. These massacres represent grave violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement and of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2254 (2015), 2258 (2015) and 2268 (2016).

On 19 April 2016, Assad regime aircraft bombarded the marketplaces of both Kafr Nabl and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man. In Kafr Nabl, local civil society groups report at least 10 people dead and 20 people injured. In Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, at least 45 people have died due to the attacks, while over 100 people have been reported as injured. These numbers are expected to rise as rescue workers recover more victims and more people lose their lives due to injuries. The majority of victims are innocent men, women and children shopping for and selling food as the bombs hit during peak business hours. The air strikes on civilian areas of Aleppo and Rif Dimashq resulted in at least 16 deaths, including of women and children.

Marketplaces are, naturally, civilian-populated areas, and these massacres demonstrate yet another example of the Assad regime's systematic policy of attacking Syrian civilians. Although the cessation of hostilities agreement went into effect on 27 February, violations by the Assad regime have steadily increased. Massacres like these, which take place in marketplaces, and last month's attacks on civilian-populated hospitals and schools not only take the lives of innocent civilians, but also threaten to break the already fragile cessation of hostilities agreement and to derail the legitimacy of the political process. In order to prevent the complete collapse of the agreement, save Syrian lives and combat impunity for these crimes, the international community and the Security Council must act with urgency:

(a) To ensure the immediate protection of civilians from indiscriminate attacks by air and by land through rigorous monitoring of the cessation of hostilities agreement and by imposing clear and meaningful consequences for any violations;

(b) To investigate these attacks without delay by sending an independent international task force to Kafr Nabl and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man with a mandate to report the facts and attribute culpability;

(c) To seek accountability for crimes committed in Syria, including these massacres, by referring the situation to the International Criminal Court or, if obstacles to such referral persist, by seeking alternative forums for pursuing accountability, including through the implementation of Member States' rights to universal jurisdiction.

For over five years, the Syrian people have been subjected to brutalization by the Assad regime and its allies. The attacks in Kafr Nabl and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man — civilian centres populated by vendors and shoppers — are not the exception; they are the norm. The Assad regime has mercilessly targeted schools, hospitals and water facilities to subjugate local populations under its iron fist. The international community must take action now to prevent further atrocities. It must uphold the cessation of hostilities agreement and pressure the Assad regime to support a political transition that leads to a sustainable peace in Syria. Let us not betray the

renewed hope that the Syrian people expressed through the re-emergence of peaceful demonstrations at the beginning of the cessation of hostilities for a peaceful transition to freedom, pluralism and a civic State for all.

(*Signed*) Riad **Hijab**
Chief Coordinator of the High Negotiations Committee

Attachment

[Original: Arabic and English]

Victims of the Kafr Nabl and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man massacres

19 April 2016

Martyrs of the Kafr Nabl massacre

1. Hussein Youssef al-Saloum
2. Yassir Ahmed al-Dandoush
3. Mohammed Mahmoud al-Farous al-Sultan
4. Ahmed Badi Zatour
5. Hussein Jamal Saweed
6. Mustafa Hussan al-Qurat Rinsafra
7. Unidentified man
8. Unidentified man
9. Unidentified elderly man
10. Unidentified child

Martyrs of the Ma'arrat al-Nu'man massacre

1. Balal Sabri
2. Mohammad al-Adalba
3. Mohammad Riad Hassoun
4. Zaher al-Hamouwi
5. Jamal al-Tabuou
6. Louay Darfeel
7. Wadah Mohammed Sultan Haidar
8. Mohammed Rajou
9. Osama Mohammed al-Shahna
10. Sami al-Shouaf
11. Ahmed al-Kurde Abou Qasem
12. Hashem Yahya al-Bayak
13. Yahya ibn Hashem al-Bayak
14. Kasir Sharif al-Deen
15. Abdel Qadir al-Adalba
16. Ayman Dahrouj
17. Rafae Haj Khalouf

18. Ahmed al-Sabri
19. Anas Abdel al-Maein al-Sufi
20. Abdel Azeez Yaseen
21. Wafa Haj Khalouf
22. Mohammed Jabir al-Halabi
23. Hazem al-Kurdi Abdel Lateef
24. Mohammed Ziad al-Jarban
25. Saleh Rijou
26. Mohammed al-Asafer
27. Omar Sheikh Abiad
28. Balal al-Namdu
29. Amir al-Adlabi
30. Ali Suraqbi
31. Adnan Ahmed al-Shabeeb
32. Hussein al-Rasheed
33. Samr Bint Sabeh al-Tinara
34. Walid Huqawi
35. Hussein Hashah
36. Muhammad al-Rashid
37. Hussein al-Rashid
38. Abdel Kadeem al-Muhammed

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Letter dated 20 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, and with reference to the letter dated 6 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/325), requesting the circulation of the letter of an entity engaged in crimes and violence in Syria, I wish to bring the following to your attention:

I strongly reject the allegations against my Government contained in the above-mentioned letter, as the presence of Iranian military advisers in the Syrian Arab Republic is upon the request of the legitimate Syrian Government and in order to help in fighting designated terrorist groups who are responsible for the killing of innocent people. These allegations are unfounded and politically motivated to divert attention away from combating terrorists and violent extremists and can amount to attempts to cover up support for these elements.

The very act of submitting such baseless propaganda by a Member State against other Member States and requesting that it be circulated as a United Nations document runs counter to the very purposes and principles of the United Nations, which consist, inter alia, of developing friendly relations among nations and peacefully resolving international disputes. This act also amounts to misusing an established practice at the United Nations and employing it in the service of spreading lies and distorting facts.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always warned against terrorism and violent extremism and the provision of support to extremists in the region. Following the savagery and barbaric crimes perpetrated against the Syrian and Iraqi peoples by extremist groups, and considering the fact that insecurity and instability do not recognize borders, it is imperative that all United Nations Member States adopt a responsible and serious approach to focus on real challenges that jeopardize peace and security in our region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

16-06675 (E) 250416

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